

Work Task E14:	Pratt Agricultural Lease
Partners:	Pratt Farms Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)
Point of Contact:	Barbara Raulston, LC-2453 (702) 293-8788
Purpose:	Demonstrate restoration and management techniques with native riparian vegetation to create habitat for southwestern willow flycatchers (SWFL), and provide vegetation cuttings and seed for use at other restoration sites along the lower Colorado River (LCR). This funding was used to pay for irrigation of the site during FY05 and the cutting of poles.
Conservation Measure:	Develop techniques in support of all covered species habitat creation requirements.
Long-term Goal:	The research is intended to provide site management criteria which would be applicable on other conservation opportunity areas. For example, tracking water diversions necessary to create suitable conditions in cooperation with bird monitoring will provide an estimate of the water requirements of future restoration projects.
Location:	12 acre agricultural site adjacent to Laguna Dam in southern Arizona.
FY05 Estimate:	\$15,000 for in-house staff, services provided by Pratt Farms, and pole harvesting provided by BLM.
Project Description:	<p>In 1999, BLM removed 12 acres from a contiguous 58 acre agricultural lease, and BLM and Reclamation restored the area with cottonwood and willow. Five years of growth have produced a healthy stand of riparian habitat and migrating SWFL use the site. However, the willow and cottonwood trees are maturing into a gallery forest that is devoid of an understory, making it largely unsuitable habitat for SWFLs. Random patches of vegetation are now being cut in order to produce different size classes and a dense shrub layer to encourage nesting by this species. In the near future, other areas adjacent to the site will also be restored to native riparian habitat in partnership with BLM</p> <p>The current Management Plan and commitments in the associated Biological Assessment agreed upon by Reclamation, FWS and BLM ensures that the following activities are implemented in a manner that is compatible with management of the site for wildlife.</p>

Items addressed in the Management Plan include: (1) monitoring, management, and protection of the site as habitat for the endangered SWFL and other native species; (2) demonstration of irrigation, planting, and vegetation management; (3) research and monitoring of various aspects of riparian vegetation; and (4) harvesting of cuttings, poles and seeds.

Selective harvesting to maintain uneven-aged stands of cottonwood and willow is being implemented by BLM, funded in 2005 by Reclamation. Reclamation and BLM are implementing the Pratt Management Demonstration Plan, Biological Assessment that involves periodic cutting within stands to create a mosaic of uneven aged, structurally diverse habitat. The site is being irrigated frequently throughout the southwestern willow flycatcher breeding season by to simulate nesting conditions. Bird surveys and banding are being conducted in conjunction with management actions to determine when and if SWFLs use the site.